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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

20 July 1951

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G-2 Recommends the following Conclusions:

"We believe that during the period covered by the estimate:

- a. The Soviets will continue to pursue vigorously their most important immediate objectives of halting Western, West German, and Japanese rearmament.
- b. Opportunities will exist for the Soviets to make limited progress towards both their immediate and long-range objectives by political warfare and Satellite aggression in certain areas, particularly Southeast Asia.
- c. The Kremlin might attempt to achieve some of its objectives by encouraging the Chinese Communists to engage in additional military operations; they might estimate that such operations could be so conducted that general war would not be precipitated.
- d. A Chinese invasion of Burma and Indochina is a definite possibility.
- e. A Chinese Communist attack on Taiwan is unlikely, as long as U. S. Fleet units are employed for its defense.
- f. Forceful seizure of Hong Kong and of Macao by the Chinese Communists is unlikely.

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g. It is unlikely that Soviet forces will attack Japan, unless such an attack is in furtherance of general war operations by the USSR.

h. A Satellite invasion of Yugoslavia is unlikely unless such an attack is in furtherance of general war operations by the USSR.

i. Attack on either Greece or Turkey is unlikely, unless such an attack is in furtherance of general war operations by the USSR.

j. A Satellite attack on the Allied forces in Berlin, West Germany or Austria is unlikely, unless such an attack is in furtherance of general war operations by the USSR.

k. If the British should use military force in their dispute with Iran, the Kremlin might invoke the 1921 Treaty and occupy at least northern Iran, estimating that it could do so with relatively little risk of general war.

l. Soviet forces are in an advanced state of readiness for war and could initiate general war at any time with little or no warning. Intelligence is lacking to permit an estimate as to when they might do so. It must be recognized that risk of general war exists now and hereafter at any time when the Kremlin may elect to take action which threatens, wholly or in part, the vital interests of the Western Powers. The international situation is so tense that any issue might develop to a point beyond the control of even the Kremlin."

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Para 2.

G-2 Recommends:

"The principal immediate Soviet objectives are:

- (1) To divide the West.
- (2) To halt Western, West German, and Japanese rearmament.
- (3) To prevent implementation of the U.S. overseas-bases policy

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Para 4.

A F Recommends:

Beginning with the second sentence revise as follows:

"Both military and non-military stocks, with the possible exception of aviation fuel, are believed to be in sufficient quantity and so distributed as generally to meet estimated Soviet requirements for sustained military operations during that period even though U. S. atomic capabilities were fully exercised against strategic targets in the USSR. However, if Soviet logistical planning and implementation parallels to any degree its World War II experience some serious shortages are almost certain to develop, especially in the electrical and mechanical fields. The degree to which these shortages would operate to retard the Soviet advance is not now ascertainable.

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Para 7.

A F recommends deletion of footnote.

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Para 9.

G-2 recommends:

Line 6. Insert "limited" after "making";

Line 8. Delete colon and add: "The reluctance of the Western Powers to become involved in general war";

Delete sub-paras (a), (b), (c) and (d).

A F recommends:

Change first sentence as follows:

"While in Soviet theory and practice war is an acceptable, and on occasion necessary, instrument for attaining Communist objectives, the Kremlin ~~probably~~ logically would prefer if possible to attain its objectives by course short of resort to general war."

Par 9 (a). Change as follows:

"The deterrent effect of the probable Communist capability to overrun most of Eurasia at will;"

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Para 10.

ONI recommends reading as follows:

"10. In discussing courses of action short of general war, it is necessary for clarity to examine each separately. In practice, Soviet policy embraces foresees all possible courses of action -- political warfare, partial Satellite or Soviet aggression, and even general war. While, therefore, separation for purposes of exposition is essential, the inseparable connection of all possible courses of action must be kept in mind.

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Para 11.

ONI recommends deletion of "fraudulently" on line 7.

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Para 13.

A F recommends:

Beginning with the next to last sentence revise as  
"The Chinese Communists almost certainly have the  
capability for conquering Burma and ~~for~~ and an invasion is  
considered to be a possibility although not a probability.  
The Chinese Communists are now capable of overrunning virtually  
all of northern Indochina and are improving their transportation  
facilities in the border area. An invasion of Indochina there-  
fore is also possible and preparations may be in progress.  
Invasion of these countries by the Chinese Communists is  
therefore a possibility. However, in view of the uncertainty  
of the outcome of the Korean situation it is impossible to  
assess at this time whether or not a Chinese Communist in-  
vasion of Indochina is probable.

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Para 14.

OIR recommends revision of last sentence to read:

"We therefore believe it unlikely that the USSR, in prevailing circumstances and in the absence of intent to precipitate general war, would either encourage or participate in a Chinese Communist attack on Taiwan."

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Para 17.

G-2 recommends:

Change last sentence to read:

"In balance, a Satellite invasion of Yugoslavia is unlikely unless such an attack is in furtherance of general war operations by the USSR".

A F recommends:

Beginning with the fifth sentence revise as follows:

". . . However, in view of the increasing Western support of Yugoslavia, the Kremlin probably estimates that eventually a Satellite attack on that country would involve not only serious risk of war between the U. S. or UN and the Satellites, but also the danger that such a conflict would develop into a general war between the U. S. and the USSR.

There is probably also a period of time during which the USSR may estimate that such a Satellite attack could be localized. On the other hand, the Kremlin might consider the Yugoslav issue as of such importance as to warrant acceptance of the risks involved in a Satellite attack, estimating particularly that these risks would be less than at some later date."

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OIR recommends that last sentence read as follows:

"A Satellite invasion of Yugoslavia must therefore,  
even in the absence of intent to precipitate general war,  
be regarded as a serious possibility."

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Para. 18

AF recommends:

Change the first sentence as follows:

"Satellite capabilities for attack on Greece and particularly on Turkey are too limited to insure success."

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Para. 20

AF recommends:

Change the third sentence as follows:

". . . It undoubtedly would provide such forces with technical and logistical aid and possibly with rear echelon participation, and if it considered the risk acceptable, might even provide "volunteer" Soviet forces in the forward areas.

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Para. 21

OIR recommends addition of following to the last sentence:

"so long as the USSR does not intend to precipitate  
general war"

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Part. 24

AF recommends:

Beginning with second sentence change as follows:

". . . If, however, the Kremlin concluded that the Communist forces were unable to retain control of North Korea or that, as a result of the extension of the area of military operations, the Chinese Communist regime itself were endangered, the Kremlin probably would right resort to increasingly drastic measures. These measures, ~~if necessary~~, might include such thinly-veiled commitment of Soviet forces against U. S. forces that the U. S. and the USSR would be engaged in a de facto local war which, if the U. S. felt compelled to recognize its existence, might at any time develop into a general war".

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Para. 26

G-2 recommends:

Line 2 - Delete "divide the West and to".

ONI recommends adding following sentence:

"If the Kremlin were to conclude that this rearmament threatened the security of the USSR and that the USSR had no clear margin of superiority, we believe that the Kremlin would alter its policy of aggression materially until such time that the Western Powers relaxed their vigilance or other factors favorable to the USSR supervened."

AF recommends:

Change second sentence as follows:

". . . If the Kremlin should fail to make sufficient progress toward that end by methods short of general war and if in addition it should become convinced that its superiority in conventional forces was jeopardized about to be offset (whether through NATO and West German or Japanese rearmament or through Western advances in unconventional armaments), we believe the Kremlin would consider the advisability of precipitating general war".

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12. Page 15, Par 26. Beginning with last sentence revise as follows:

"... On the other hand, if the Kremlin were to conclude that this rearmament threatened the security and/or eventual world power position of the USSR, we believe the Kremlin would precipitate general war if it provided that it then that the USSR had a clear margin of superiority and that delay would tip the scales of power irretrievably against the USSR. There is of course a possibility that even without a clear margin of superiority the Kremlin might precipitate a general war as an act of desperation if it concluded that there was no prospect for attaining its eventual aims by other means."

OIR recommends that last two sentences read as follows:

"However, we believe it unlikely that the Kremlin would adopt this course of action so long as Western rearmament appeared to it only as a transitory barrier impediment to further Soviet and Satellite expansion. On the other hand, we believe that the Kremlin would precipitate general war if it estimated that this rearmament threatened the security of the USSR, that the Western powers did not already have a clear margin of superiority, and that delay would tip the scales of power irretrievably against the USSR."

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Para. 27

AF recommends revising paragraph as follows:

"We believe that within the period covered by this estimate U. S. NATO, West German and Japanese rearmament is unlikely to progress to the point where the Kremlin would in fact regard it as an immediate threat to Soviet the security of the USSR and/or its eventual position as a world power. We are, however, unable to determine at what stage of the Western rearmament program the USSR might consider its security these threatened- conditions as having developed, and we recognize the possibility that the Kremlin might at any time misinterpret Western defensive measures as indicating an imminent attack on the USSR.

OIR recommends that paragraph read as follows:

"27. We believe that within the period covered by this estimate US, NATO, West German and Japanese rearmament is unlikely to progress to the point where the Kremlin would in-fact necessarily regard it as an immediate threat to Soviet security. We are, however, unable to determine at what stage of the Western rearmament program the USSR might actually consider its security immediately or potentially threatened. We also recognize the possibility that the Kremlin might at any time misinterpret Western defensive measures as indicating an imminent attack on the USSR."

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Para. 23

AF recommends:

Change the last sentence as follows:

"... In any event, the international situation is so tense that any an issue might develop to a point beyond the control even of the Kremlin.

OIR recommends insertion of "moreover" in first sentence.

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New Paragraphs

G-2 recommends:

Insert the following as para 28, to follow para 27, and then renumber present 28 as para 29:

28. While intelligence is lacking to permit a valid prediction as to whether or when the Soviet Union may actually exercise its initiative and capability to launch a general war, it must be recognized that the risk of general war exists now and hereafter at any time when the Soviet rulers may elect to take action which threatens, wholly or in part, the vital interests of the Western Powers.

ONI recommends:

Add the following paragraph:

"29. Although the possibility of war by miscalculation cannot be discounted during periods of high international tension, we believe that, all aspects of the Soviet problem considered, it is unlikely that the USSR will deliberately choose to risk the hazards of general war during the period covered by this estimate. Moreover, we believe that in pursuing various courses of action short of war with the US, the USSR will attempt to increase its power and damage the interests

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of the US whenever and wherever feasible, but will at every turn seek to exploit each course of action with such precaution as to avoid grounds for accusation of direct military aggression against the vital interests of the United States".

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